some time back received a proposal from the Stock Exchange, Mumbai seeking permission for expansion of its On Line Trading terminals to locations outside Mumbai on a national level. The objectives of the proposal were, inter alia, to increase the volume of trading in securities, to provide a more direct and transparent access to investors outside Mumbai to the Online trading facility of the Exchange and to bring down the cost of transactions in securities.

(b) The Board of SEBI in its meeting held on 29th October, 1996 took a decision to permit the Stock Exchange, Mumabi and other Exchanges to expand their online screen based trading terminals to areas outside the place where the concerned Exchange is located, subject to certain conditions. This decision was conveyed to all the Stock Exchanges by SEBI vide a letter dated 30th October, 1996.

Banking Facilities in Rural Sector

2500. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to enhance banking facilities in the rural sector;

(b) whether Government propose to revive the Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) which are falling sick;

(c) if so, the sick RRB's identified for revival;

(d) the net loss sustained by thse RRBs each; and

(e) the fund earmarked for the revival of sick RRBs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) With a view to providing institutional mechanisms for promoting rural savings as well as for the provision of credit for viable economic activities in the local areas, Governemnt have decided to allow the establishment of new local banks in the private sector. This is expected to bridge the gaps in credit availability and enhance the institutional frame work in the rural and semi urban areas.

(b) and (c) As a part of restructuring of Regional Rural Banks (RRBs), Government have provided budgetary support for recapitalisation of RRBs on a "Stand alone" basis. While 49 RRBs were taken up for equity support in 1994-95, 53 RRBs were recapitalised during the year 1995-96. During the current year, 17 more RRBs have been provided equity support so far, besides giving additional equity support to some of RRBs already covered.

(d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(e) An amount of Rs. 150 corres was released by the Government in the year 1994-95 as its share of equity support to select RRBs. During 1995-96, an amount of Rs. 223.57 crores was provided by the Government for the purpose. During the current year, as on 28.02.1997, an amount of Rs. 125 crores has been released to RRBs. The balance provision of Rs. 75 crores is likely to be released during the current year itself. Further, a budgetary provision of Rs. 270 crores has been made for recapitalisation of RRBs during the year 1997-98.

Benefits of Service to the Personnel in the Armed Forces Deputed in Foreign Countries Testing HIV Positive

2501. SHRI JALALUDIN ANSARI: SHRI N. GIRI PRASAD:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that some of the personnel in the armed/para-military/ security forces who have been deputed in foreign countries in the past few years have tested HIV positive;